# Cross-cultural Management

## Part A

Values underpin the various behavioural dissimilarities that exist in diverse cultures. Geert Hofstede (2011, p. 3) indicates that culture is the entire indoctrination of the human mind that separates one group of people from the other sections. Accordingly, culture is typically a collective phenomenon, but one may also link it to different collectives (Hofstede, 2011). Each collective comprises different individuals; therefore, if the characteristics of individuals are presumed to be varying from the viewpoint of a bell curve, the variation between two cultures may be understood as the change in the bell curve as a person moves from one society to another. In most cases, the concept culture is used for ethnic groups or tribes (anthropology), nations (political science), and organizations (management). The term can also be used to explore groups like social classes, generations, and genders (Zabihi, 2013). However, as changes in the level of aggregation occur, so do the shifts like culture, as a concept (Callahan, 2006). The national, societal, and gender cultures that children acquire as they grow up are usually stronger than the occupational cultures that they receive in the workplace or at school (Hofstede, 2011). People typically acquire organizational cultures as they interact with each other, but societal cultures are usually embedded in the unconscious since individuals typically prefer particular states over others. Conversely, organizational cultures are usually present in the conscious since individuals typically react to the issues that take place in their corporate environment depending on the visible circumstances (Hofstede, 2011). The following discussion uses Hofstede’s cultural dimension theory to compare and contrast the Japanese and Chinese cultures and discuss the potential issues that may arise if people from these cultures do business together.

 Hofstede developed a four-value dimension theory that produces a comprehensive overview of the behavioural differences that exist in different cultures. The first dimension is Power Distance (Hofstede, 2011). Hofstede conceptualizes this dimension regarding the manner in which the less influential members of society or organizations accept and anticipate that power should be distributed unevenly. This understanding defines inequality from below, as opposed from above. Accordingly, Hofstede indicates that inequality is the product of both the followers and leaders. In the end, Geert contends that even if all communities are unequal, some are more imbalanced than others. The second dimension is Uncertainty Avoidance, which deals with the manner in which a community tolerates ambiguity. It reflects how a particular culture teaches its associates to either feel secure or insecure in unstructured situations. Unstructured situations may be viewed as new, surprising, and dissimilar from the norm (Hofstede, 2011). Uncertainty avoiding cultures tend to develop strict laws, customs, codes, and a belief in an absolute Truth that cannot be disputed.

Third, Hofstede conceptualizes individualism on one side against its opposite (collectivism) as a societal characteristic. He contends that individualism is the extent to which society is put together in different groups (Hofstede, 2011). A culture that may be viewed as individualist is one where ties between people are loose, and individuals are only expected to take care of themselves or their close family members. Conversely, a collectivist society is one where individuals stick together from birth and continue to maintain close ties in exchange for undivided loyalty and opposition to other groups. Finally, Hofstede pits masculinity against femininity (Hofstede, 2011). He contends that masculinity is a societal concept that reflects the distribution of values between different genders as an essential issue for any group of people, to which various explanations are found. Hofstede indicates that one the one side, women's values are less different than men's values in the majority of societies. On the other hand, men's values vary fairly definitely across different communities. Men's roles move from the relatively aggressive and competitive positions that are different to women's roles to the caring and modest roles, which are similar to women's roles. The assertive element has been associated with masculinity while the modest element is associated with femininity (Hofstede, 2011). In the feminist countries, women are usually caring and modest while in the masculine countries, women tend to be competitive and assertive.

With the above presumptions considered, the cultures of the Japan and China are relatively distinct. The power distance in the Japanese is relatively lower than that of the Chinese culture. Hofstede indicates that China’s inheritance law is similar to that of Latin Europe, which affirms that inheritance should be distributed equally across all heirs (Yeh, 1988). Such a distribution means smaller family sizes and farms are bound to emerge; accordingly, the smaller family size means that parental control is likely to weigh heavier on the young ones, which is likely to lead to the development of high power distance values for the entire nation (Yeh, 1988). Japan’s one son inheritance law shows low power distance values when compared to China.

Second, uncertainty avoidance is higher in the Japanese culture when compared to that of the Chinese. Hofstede affirms that uncertainty avoidance in Hong Kong and Singapore is much higher than in Taiwan (Yeh, 1988). The Chinese are exceedingly relativistic individuals regarding their sense of morality. In contrast, ancestor worship in Japan is a way of avoiding uncertainty. Hofstede indicates that various consequences follow the organizations that set up shop in the high uncertainty avoidance nations since activities are usually exceedingly structured, too many written rules, there exists a substantial number of specialists, there are less risk-taking management styles and less ambitious workers.

Third, Hofstede indicates that the Chinese people are more individualistic than the Japanese. Hofstede affirms that the Japanese formation of man demonstrates that man is of low individualism (Yeh, 1988). The Japanese and Chinese lack a western concept of “personality: that is considered to be a separate and distinct entity from society. The Japanese and Chinese use the idea of *Jen* to identify a person’s “human constant,” which incorporates the surrounding of a person and his thought pattern. According to Hofstede, this is one of the reasons that the Japanese and Chinese countries score relatively low when it comes o individualism (Yeh, 1988). Additionally, in countries like Japan, which score low on individualism, people transfer part of their extended family allegiances to the company that one works for. Studies indicate that although no fundamental difference exists between the Japanese and Chinese kinship systems, the Chinese kinship system is more receptive than the clan. In Japan, the extent of the Iemoto offers an opportunity for voluntary entry to any grouping (Yeh, 1988). Accordingly, the Chinese are more likely to be loyal to their families while the Chinese are highly likely to be loyal to their organizations.

Finally, the Hofstede indicates that the Japanese show higher levels of masculinity that the Chinese. The countries that tend to focus on issues that concern the environment are highly likely to feminine in nature while the ones that concentrate on the economic aspects are masculine (Yeh, 1988). In Asia, Japan has significant population issues, which it lacks the capacity to address. Conversely, China has put in place different ways of addressing its population problems (Pham, 2012). In this regard, the population control systems that have been put in place in Taiwan, Singapore, and Hong Kong suggest that the Chinese system is more feminine than that of Japan. The individuals that have lived in Japan affirm that the nation is more interested in instituting measures that promote economic actions than environmental problems.

Considering the above presumptions, an individual from either country may experience trouble working with a person from either nation due to various issues. To begin with, Taiwan and Japan do not have a similar organizational structure (Yeh, 1988). Hofstede indicates that Taiwan and Japan may be categorized in a grou0p that has a high uncertainty avoidance. Such a group is usually guided by bureaucracy, which rigidly describes the relationship between people and work processes through formal rules and traditions (Yeh, 1988). However, the group that subsists in Hong Kong is one whose power distance is high, and uncertainty avoidance is weak. Accordingly, the organizations in such a nation may be categorized as personal bureaucracies since the idea of Government of Law and Government of Man implemented (Khairullah and Khairullah, 2013). In essence, the relationships of individuals are regulated by the hierarchy framework and the code of work is not systemized (Yeh, 1988). In the end, one realizes that the Japanese organization has less formalized rules, and is characterized by the values that are socially induced. In this regard, the Chinese and the Japanese have an incentive system that is less conventional.

Hofstede indicates that the American motivational theory presumes that masculinity and uncertainty avoidance suggests that people are motivated by wealth, recognition, and success motivate personal success. According to Hofstede, individuals, in Britain, the U.S., and the colonies of these nations emphasize personal success when it comes to discussing motivation (Yeh, 1988). However, in The Japan-speaking nations are usually concerned with individual and personal security while the Asian speaking nations are interested in developing a state of belongingness and security (Reichelt, 2017). In these nations, wealth accumulation is a less critical factor in developing group solidarity. The Chinese community usually places family or individual wealth above organizational solidarity.

## Part B

Cross-cultural communication is a significant barrier for managers across the globe. Studies indicate that the rapid growth of technology and global expansion contribute to increased communication across different nations (Okoro, 2013). Accordingly, the various highly dynamic and international industries become the centre stage of cultural diversity, which has escalated to become a primary contributor of opportunities and complexities in the modern world. Issues such as unclear messages not only confuse companies’ staff but also lead to the development of unwarranted results for companies (Mordenfeld, Johansson and Giron, 2012). Accordingly, corporations strive to avoid misunderstandings; these businesses ensure that they communicate their messages in a clear and understandable manner (Communicaid, 2017). In this regard, personal judgment has been forwarded as the most successful way of withholding personal judgment, observing and learning, assuming diversity, tolerating ambiguity, showing respect, and being flexible. The following discussion reveals why cross-cultural communication is an underestimated obstacle in international management.

 Expanding into other countries involves understanding how business is conducted in such nations and not just about understanding how to position a product or service. As retail brands expand their retail brands to other countries, they consider issues like the tastes, trends, innovation. Furthermore, these individuals consider things like cultural diversity and the mindset of the local people, suppliers, and partners (Communicaid, 2017). Presentation styles, expectations, customer behaviours, local taboos, and employee relationships are some of the critical considerations that most corporations overlook when venturing into overseas markets.

 Linguistic misunderstandings can occur in any market. Even in the English-speaking nations, individuals may face numerous linguistic challenges. For instance, British retailers may need to do more than changing pounds to dollars (Communicaid, 2017). These traders may have to contend with the embarrassment and confusion that emanates from talking about clothes like trousers, pants, jumpers, and vests. Measuring systems and sizing differences between the two nations also differ profoundly (Communicaid, 2017). If a foreign language is included in all these issues, problems like unintentional meanings of branding and slogans arise.

 Product positioning moves beyond words. In countries like Saudi Arabia, headless mannequins are required to ensure that a foreign company adheres to the nation’s understanding of religious laws. Also, the use of sexualized images is unacceptable in some parts of Europe. Local rituals and customs also go a long way toward positioning a product in a foreign nation (Communicaid, 2017). For instance, diffusers in the more significant part of Asia may remind customers of worshipping their dead relatives in a manner that is sensitive.  Numbers and colours have dissimilar significance in various parts of the globe.  Crockery or cutlery put in position in sets of four may be a turn off in a nation like China this is an unlucky number, but such an incident may be considered to be appropriate in a western nation where the distinctive family unit is four.  Colours can also be figurative.  Behaviours like white wrapping in India are associated with death. However, blue represents protection in different Mediterranean nations, but the colour represents mourning in countries like Korea, Mexico, and Iran (Communicaid, 2017).  A state’s national colours may also be taken into consideration since they may be off limits for industries like clothing.

In some markets, the quality of a product might be more valuable than quantity and making premium items in limited editions may be more attractive.  Having a well-known designer logo on exhibition may be less attractive in cultures where superficial status is not vastly valued. In other cultures, custom and stability are favoured(Communicaid, 2017).  A case in point is Fairy Liquid, which knew that this approach is a successful publicity campaign. The company ran a few years ago in the United Kingdom, which strengthened the product’s long-term dependability.  Their operation in Egypt also focused on the company’s relevance to modern day life, used well-liked actors as endorsements and demonstrated a thoughtful appreciation of relationships.

Building links with new colleagues also require careful contemplation. In specific, when entering markets that need relationships that are essential to doing business, more time is typically spent on face-to-face interactions and resources are spent when trying to gain entry into many Latin or Asian markets (Communicaid, 2017). Nevertheless, higher reliance is often based on transaction-based email correspondence when working with two western markets.  Also, it is also vital to think about whom a company needs to know and how that individual leads to increased profits in the business (Communicaid, 2017). Local and national governments and essential local family connections or religious groups may all engage in recreation as part of the success of the new venture.  In some nations one may always have to work with a joint venture business or partner; however, this approach may not be necessary for every market.

Start-up executives also have to understand how they should cooperate with their staff. Once the operation has started running, managers should adapt their communication with their sales teams (Communicaid, 2017). The methods of staff acknowledgment and performance response should change as since the expectations of independence and conformity vary across different nations. For instance, various retailers have put great effort to oblige a uniform and customer-facing staff in France to ensure that the high values that companies place on individuality are met (Communicaid, 2017).  Additionally, the expectations of good customer service are exceedingly different from the universally applied concepts.  Furthermore, the American Full Smile and ‘have a nice day’ approaches have not always reflected well to the Eastern European or Russian markets.

International expansion has also become an essential part of most large retailers’ strategies.  The companies that achieve the maximum success in the overseas markets are the ones that are familiar with the desire to take a unique approach to how they interact with their employees, partners, and customers (Communicaid, 2017). Communication barriers, cultural gaffes, or poor customer service are likely to be extremely costly in any nation that a business operates in. Workers need to understand the mission and vision goals of an enterprise and its employee expectations. Such endeavours increase motivation since workers know what their affiliate companies or employers require from them and how they should achieve their objectives (Communicaid, 2017). Accordingly, enterprises should align their goals in a way that reflects the manner in which the indigenous population of a particular country perceives the world or understands its culture.

Considering the above presumptions, coming up with worldwide management dexterity is as difficult as relating cross-cultural aptitudes with decision-making skills. The managers that prepare for multinational jobs must get ready to acquire skills in tactical interventions and cross-cultural communication (Okoro, 2013). The process of arbitration is culture-specific and envelopes a great amount of sensitivity. Studies indicate that the capacity to carry out cross-cultural interventions cannot be dispensed; this understanding places global executives in a position to gain an understanding of the complexities that may be associated with cultural shades and values (Okoro, 2013). Moreover, research highlights that the intrinsic difficulties that are found in international business due to the need to gain an understanding of cultural and regulatory variations are critical to ensuring business success. For example, global trade protocol requires individuals to have the capability to become accustomed to diverse national patterns, procedures, and acculturations. Such a strategy should be based on aggressive positioning and long-term triumphant business processes in a business environment that is both multinational and sound. The knowledge of consulting processes and decision-making approaches of managers usually comes from different regions of the globe

Accordingly, different studies indicate that a strong association exists between successful intercontinental management and cross-cultural contact. Research stresses that a healthy intercultural communication is critical to both the foreign and domestic managers of multicultural and multinational enterprises (Okoro, 2013). A lack of sufficient communication, misunderstanding, or misinterpretation is highly likely occur among the managers and workers of different ethnic divides and populations than amongst the managers and individuals that trace their existence from homogenous surroundings. The aptitude to communicate in a cross-cultural manner is required of the executives that seek to do well in global accomplishments. The managers that are ready to work in the familial businesses that have a dissimilar workforce or the individuals that are planning to labour in distant environments must be sufficiently flexible and educated to regulate their communication prototypes to the proposed audience.

In a recap of the above discussion, Hofstede’s cultural dimension theory compares and contrasts the Japanese and Chinese cultures and discusses the possible issues that may come up if inhabitants from these cultures do business together. Values underpin the various behavioural dissimilarities that exist in diverse cultures. In most cases, culture is used to describe ethnic groups or tribes, nations, and organizations. One may also use culture to understand groups like social classes, generations, and genders. Nonetheless, as changes in the level of understanding grow the shifts in the character of culture occur. The national, societal, and gender cultures that young ones acquire as they mature are typically stronger than the occupational cultures that they obtain in the workplace or at school. Individuals usually acquire organizational cultures as they interrelate with each other, but societal cultures are embedded in people’s unconscious since individuals typically favour certain states of affairs over others. On the other hand, organizational cultures are typically present in the conscious since people usually react to the issues that take place in their corporate surroundings depending on the visible circumstances, as discussed above.

## References

Callahan, E., 2006. Cultural Similarities and Differences in the Design of University Web sites. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 11(1), pp.239-273.

Communicaid, 2017. Communication Challenges of International Retailers. *Communicaid.com*.

Hofstede, G., 2011. Dimensionalizing Cultures: The Hofstede Model in Context. *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture*, 2(1).

Khairullah, D. and Khairullah, Z., 2013. Cultural Values and Decision-Making in China. *International Journal of Business, Humanities, and Technology*, 3(2).

Mordenfeld, F., Johansson, S., and Giron, P. (2012).

Okoro, E., 2013. International Organizations and Operations: An Analysis of Cross-Cultural Communication Effectiveness and Management Orientation. *Journal of Business & Management*, 1(1).

Pham, H., 2012. Compare and contrast Japanese and Chinese culture. *Srenk*.

Reichelt, K., 2017. Organizational culture in China and Japan - A comparative analysis based on the perspective of Austrian employees. *Ecos*.

Yeh, R., 1988. On Hofstede's treatment of Chinese and Japanese values. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*, 6(1), pp.149-160.

Zabihi, G., 2013. Culture and management style: A study of differences of Chinese and Swedish management style from Swedish perception. *diva-portal*.